CITY OF OTTAWA - VILLE D'OTTAWA

From: Community Development Department Date: July 11, 1985
De:

Ref. No.: O/13-334/85 A1E031
N°de ref.:

Action Exécution		Information Pour votre gouverne	Ward Quartier
[ ] Administrative administrative	[X] Policy politique	[ ]	City Wide

To/A:

[1] Ottawa Planning Committee
Comité d'urbanisme d'Ottawa

[ ] Physical Environment Committee
Comité de l'environnement

[ ] Admin., Policy and Priorities Committee
Comité de l'adm., des politiques et des priorités

[ ] Other
Autre

Non-Profit Housing
Logement à but non lucratif

[2] Executive Committee
Comité exécutif

[4] Board of Directors
Conseil d'administration

[3] City Council
Conseil municipal

SUBJECT/OBJET

4. Potential for City Involvement in Shared Housing Programmes. CD-42-10-2.

Possibilité de participation de la Ville dans les programmes d'habitation partagée.

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

1. That the City fund a Shared Housing Programme for families, for an amount not to exceed Thirty Thousand ($30,000) Dollars, to be initiated in 1985.

OTTAWA PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee concurs and so recommends.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee concurs and so recommends.

EPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Community Development Department be authorized to approach the YM-YWCA Housing Placement Service and the Regional Match and Share Programme regarding potential sponsorship of a Shared Housing Programme for families. This sponsorship would be in the form of a grant to be secured by a purchase of service agreement to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Community Development.

OTTAWA PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee concurs and so recommends.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee concurs and so recommends.

ADDITIONAL OTTAWA PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee further recommends that staff review with the Regional Emergency Housing staff whether this would be an appropriate location for a match and share family-oriented program.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee does not concur and so recommends.

Yeas: Aldermen Hasenack, Holzman, Laviolette and Robert

Nays: Alderman MacDougall

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

3. That once the above actions are initiated by Community Development, they be transferred to City Living for administration and ongoing monitoring and evaluation and the appropriate funds be transferred to City Living at the appropriate time.

OTTAWA PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee concurs and so recommends.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee concurs and so recommends.

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

4. That City Living undertake a Shared Housing Awareness Programme on a one year pilot basis, to be initiated in 1985, for an amount not to exceed $43,000. This will include provision of funds to hire a Shared Housing Community Liaison Officer, cover overhead costs and provide advertising space in major and community newspapers for shared housing programmes. The officer will provide public education about Shared Housing Programmes, and will assist local community groups institute their own small local Shared Housing Programmes.

OTTAWA PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommends that recommendation 4 be referred to staff to see if it can be accomplished by Purchase of Service with an existing group.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee concurs and so recommends.

ADDITIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee further recommends that the following be incorporated into a report presently being prepared for presentation to the new Housing Minister:

That the Ontario Housing Corporation be requested to review underutilizations of existing public housing units in OCRHA jurisdiction.

That a review be undertaken of accommodation policies to increase utilization including:

- sharing of accommodation by families
- sharing by multi-generation families
- permitting roomers
- permitting sharing by singles

That they also review the possibility of converting larger units to smaller accommodation.

BACKGROUND

As part of the work of the Housing Study Team, several new areas for City involvement in housing are being analyzed for their potential value. One possible alternative for City involvement which may lead to improved access to affordable housing for low and moderate income earners is the shared housing programme concept.

Shared housing programmes generally match people wishing to share their homes with others looking for a shared living situation, or they match two or more potential home-sharers, who then seek a house or apartment to rent together. They are well established in the United States. According to The National Shared Housing Resource Center in Philadelphia, over 250 such programmes were in existence by 1983. Most of these programmes are funded publicly at the local level or by private foundations.

There are several reasons why such programmes have been implemented. The most important ones are their relatively low cost compared to any housing programmes which actually produce units (i.e., increase housing supply); the short time period needed to implement the programmes; the self-selectivity that is allowed for participants; the strong level of support for such programmes in many communities; and their ability to assist in intensifying the use of under-utilized housing.

While the nature of the programmes vary, most were initiated to match senior citizens with others of the same age or of younger generations. Some programmes bring a group of potential home sharers together to buy or rent a large house; others arrange one-to-one matches between home providers and home seekers. There are a small number of programmes which exclusively serve families (such as one in Seattle called Homesharing for Families), or singles (such as Operation Match in Montgomery County, Maryland). One particularly innovative programme is "Family Care" operated by Project Home Share in New Haven, Conneticut. It matches young, single mothers and their children with homeowners who have been unable to qualify as adoptive or foster parents, and/or with single homeowners who can serve as adult role models.

CITY OF OTTAWA - VILLE D'OTTAWA

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[3] City Council / Conseil municipal

SUBJECT/OBJET

Potential for City Involvement in Shared Housing Programmes. CD-42-10-2.

Possibilité de participation de la Ville dans les programmes d'habitation partagée.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the City fund a Shared Housing Programme for families, for an amount not to exceed Thirty Thousand ($30,000) Dollars, to be initiated in 1985.

2. That the Community Development Department be authorized to approach the YM-YWCA Housing Placement Service and the Regional Match and Share Programme regarding potential sponsorship of a Shared Housing Programme for families. This sponsorship would be in the form of a grant to be secured by a purchase of service agreement to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Community Development.

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R. Bailey,
Commissioner of
Community Development.

EA:df-2
A1E031
05/07/85

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OTTAWA PLANNING COMMITTEE
JUL 23 1985
Carried as amended

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Secretariat C.M.H.C.
JUL 24 1985
Carried as amended

C.C.N.P.H.C.
COUNCIL REPORT
12A
AUG 7 1985
Carried

BACKGROUND

As part of the work of the Housing Study Team, several new areas for City involvement in housing are being analyzed for their potential value. One possible alternative for City involvement which may lead to improved access to affordable housing for low and moderate income earners is the shared housing programme concept.

Shared housing programmes generally match people wishing to share their homes with others looking for a shared living situation, or they match two or more potential home-sharers, who then seek a house or apartment to rent together. They are well established in the United States. According to The National Shared Housing Resource Center in Philadelphia, over 250 such programmes were in existence by 1983. Most of these programmes are funded publicly at the local level or by private foundations.

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While the nature of the programmes vary, most were initiated to match senior citizens with others of the same age or of younger generations. Some programmes bring a group of potential home sharers together to buy or rent a large house; others arrange one-to-one matches between home providers and home seekers. There are a small number of programmes which exclusively serve families (such as one in Seattle called Homesharing for Families), or singles (such as Operation Match in Montgomery County, Maryland). One particularly innovative programme is "Family Care" operated by Project Home Share in New Haven, Conneticut. It matches young, single mothers and their children with homeowners who have been unable to qualify as adoptive or foster parents, and/or with single homeowners who can serve as adult role models.

Initiatives in Ottawa-Carleton

1. The Match and Share Programme

   In the fall of 1984, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, through the Homes for the Aged, launched the "Match and Share Programme" which matches potential home seekers with home providers. The programme is designed primarily to serve senior citizens (aged 55 and over), although intergenerational matches are also arranged, with the stipulation that one of the parties be a senior citizen. The intent of the programme is to assist senior citizens in avoiding institutionalization, reducing their housing costs and remaining in their own communities and/or in a private home environment. At the present time, the programme has far more home providers on its waiting list than home seekers.

2. The YM-YWCA Housing Placement Service

   The YM-YWCA Housing Placement Service is not officially classified as a shared housing programme, although in effect, it operates as one. The Placement Service's staff solicit listings of rooms and flats available in the Centretown area that are suitable for low and moderate income single persons; they inspect the accommodation, interview potential tenants, and then refer home seekers to landlords or homeowners. Due to funding and staffing constraints, the services of the office are not available to families. Senior citizens are referred to the Match and Share Programme.

3. Ottawa-Carleton Low Income Support Service's (OCLISS) Matching Service for Single Parents

In 1983 and 1984, OCLISS ran a very limited shared housing programme for low-income single parents. Due to a lack of funding, OCLISS cancelled the programme at the end of 1984. While the programme was in existence, a single parent looking for another with whom to share housing could phone the office and receive three or four names of people looking for a similar living arrangement. Although OCLISS apparently received many calls about the programme, a lack of staffing prevented the organization from providing counselling, or assistance with home seeking in cases where neither party owned shelter which apparently was a common phenomenon.

OPTIONS

N/A

RATIONALE

City support of shared housing programmes in the form of a grant, free publicity and/or sponsorship of a community liaison officer, could help to meet the City's goals of providing greater access to affordable housing for low and moderate income senior citizens, single people and families. It could also help to intensify use of existing stock; enable community-based organizations such as the YW-YMCA to take a more active role in housing programmes; and it could be undertaken at a relatively low cost to the City.

While shared housing programmes will not provide the answer for all those needing housing assistance in the City, the early experience of the Region's Match and Share Programme, the response to OCLISS's short lived programme for single parents and the success of Amercan shared housing programmes all indicate that a strong demand for such programmes exists by both low to moderate income earners, and higher income homeowners.

1. & 2. Financial Assistance to Expand An Existing Shared Housing Programme

The existing shared housing programmes operated respectively by the YM-YWCA and the Regional Homes for the Aged, primarily serve, in the case of the Y, low income single people, and in the case of the Region, senior citizens. In the Regional Match and Share Programme, it is possible that one party in a "match" may be less than 55 years old. Staff of both programmes feel that all of their existing resources are being used to capacity to serve their current client groups. The net result is that presently, neither single parent families nor two parent families are key client groups of the programmes. If one of the programmes is broadened to include families, staff believe more matching opportunities might be available for all client groups.

With City funding assistance to one of these programmes, a staff person could be hired to expand the programme to include families. Families, both two parent and one parent led, are key groups needing housing assistance in the City. In 1980, there were 8,315 low and moderate income, one and two parent families in the City with unmet housing needs and there is no reason to believe that these figures have declined in recent years.

By providing financial assistance to expand the YM-YWCA programme or the Regional programme, the City would be helping to broaden a programme which is already successfully established in the community. Staff at both the YM-YWCA and the Match and Share Programme have indicated an interest in expanding their programmes to serve families, particularly single-parent families, if additional funding were available.

City funding of such an expansion would be a cost effective way to increase the availability of affordable housing in the City for low and moderate income earners. For $30,000.00, which is less than half the cost of constructing one new social housing unit (a 3 bedroom townhouse currently averages $65,000.00), several families could potentially be housed more adequately than they are at present.

Assuming the City funds a shared housing programme to provide services to families, a major concern will be the availability of appropriate units for "blended families". When OCLISS ran their programme in 1983 and 1984, single parents who decided to share had difficulty finding affordable accommodation suited to their needs. In order to improve the chances of success for a homesharing programme for families, it is recommended that the ultimate sponsor of the programme, undertake as one of its first tasks, discussions with various public and private agencies to determine the possibility of making units in their stock available for the programme. These agencies include City Living, the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Housing Authority, the Ottawa Federation of Housing Co-operatives, Centretown Citizens (Ottawa) Corporation and major private sector owners of rental units such as Minto and Costain Homes.

If such discussions are fruitful, a potential obstacle to the success of the programme will be at least partially removed.

3. It would be most expedient for the Housing Team staff in Community Development to draw up the terms of the purchase of service agreement and undertake discussions with the YM-YWCA and the Regional Match and Share Programme. However, once this initial groundwork has been laid, it would be most appropriate for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the purchase of service agreement to be carried out by City Living as a part of their Third Sector Liaison function. The staff resource within City Living to undertake this work could be the Shared Housing Community Liaison Officer as proposed in recommendation #4. Should, however, the Shared Housing Awareness Programme not be approved, it would be necessary for City Living to review whether it could accommodate this work within its current resources.

In terms of funding, it is recommended that one-third of the budget ($10,000) be allocated for 1985 and the remaining two-thirds ($20,000) to be allocated in 1986.

4. <u>City Funding of a Shared Housing Awareness Programme</u>

It is possible that shared housing programmes could be operated without paid staff if they were very small in scale and fit in with existing community organizations' structures. Were a community liaison officer available to provide public education about shared housing programmes, and to teach local parish groups and other community bodies how to organize such programmes, there is a chance that several would come into existence. Small, local-based programmes would meet the needs of homeowners and tenants who want to stay in their own communities and/or are fearful of entering into shared living arrangements with strangers. The proposed funding would provide a maximum of $28,000 for the Community Liaison Officer's position, and $12,000 for overhead costs.

By providing advertising space in The Citizen, Le Droit and community newspapers to shared housing programmes such as the Match and Share Programme and the YM-YWCA Housing Registry, the City would be offering its public endorsement of the programmes, as well as increasing awareness in the community of their availability. The vast majority of housing providers in the YM-YWCA programme are located within the City of Ottawa, and Match and Share staff estimate that 60-70% of their clients are City residents. As well, it is assumed that the great majority of clients served as a result of the expansion of this programme to families, would also live in the City. This service, therefore, would be provided for the most part to City residents in need of affordable housing.

The maximum cost of providing this service could be set at $3,000/year: $1,500 to be allocated for community newspaper advertisements, and $1,500 for advertisements in Le Droit and The Citizen. To minimize City staff time required for this service, the Shared Housing Programmes could be instructed to provide camera-ready copy of their advertisements to the City.

The recommended Shared Housing Awareness Programme is very similar in nature to the third sector liaison function which City Living currently operates with the private non-profit and co-operative housing sectors. It is appropriate, therefore, that implementation of the Shared Housing Awareness Programme be undertaken by City Living.

One third ($14,330) of the City's budget for the Shared Housing Awareness Programme should be allocated for 1985, with two-thirds ($28,660) allocated to the programme for 1986.

Summary

Should the City become involved in supporting shared housing programmes, it would be branching out in a new direction to help solve the housing problems faced by low and moderate income single people, senior citizens, and families. The three recommendations in this report would, if undertaken, provide City assistance to each of the target groups listed above.

The first three recommendations are suggested to enable a community-based shared housing programme to expand its mandate to serve families and in particular, single parent families. Recommendation 4 would increase public awareness and allow small localized shared housing programmes to be established. It is also intended to support existing and new shared housing programmes and to help increase public awareness of the programmes.

Shared housing programmes are working effectively in many urban areas in the United States; this may be an appropriate time to promote them in the City of Ottawa.

INPUT FROM OTHER SOURCES

I concur.

C. Young
Acting Housing Manager

ATTACHMENT

1. List of People Interviewed While Preparing This Report.

COMPATIBILITY WITH PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

Publics Identified:

- Groups interested in housing issues - Social Planning Council, Ottawa Federation of Housing Co-operatives, Centretown Citizen's (Ottawa) Corporation, Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants' Association, Association of Centretown Tenants, Ottawa Council for Low Income Support Services, Interval House, Council on Aging, Community Centres, Daybreak Non-Profit Shelter Corporation.

- Representatives from existing shared housing programmes - Match and Share; YM-YWCA Housing Placement Service.

- Representatives from the Four Ward Coalition.

- Individuals who expressed an interest in the Housing Study.

Notification and Consultation Process:

The above noted groups and individuals were sent a copy of the draft Action Proposal for Shared Housing Programmes and invited to a consultation session on May 22, 1985, with members of the Housing Team.

Summary of Input:

There was general consensus among groups and individuals in attendance on May 22, 1985, that the concept of "shared housing" was a good one and had potential for making better use of under-utilized housing. In addition, it was noted that shared housing would provide another option for people who have very few options to begin with. It was suggested that shared housing providers may be eligible for income tax benefits. This could be a selling point to the community, but more research would be required.

There was a recommendation from several in attendance that any new shared housing programmes supported by the City be closely co-ordinated with, and built upon the existing programmes run by the YM-YWCA and the Homes for the Aged. The Subcommittee for the Match and Share Programme at the Homes for the Aged and the YM-YWCA, would be willing to entertain proposals for expanding their respective programmes.

There was concern expressed over whether or not a single parents' shared housing programme was a viable initiative. The question was raised: Is the demand there for such a programme? It was recommended that co-op housing would be more appropriate for single parent families and that this should be encouraged. There were suggestions that an intergenerational programme would also be appropriate for families and other target groups (such as single people).

Other persons were concerned that shared housing programmes may have the effect of "hiding" the housing problem. It was felt that the legal conditions of tenancy needed to be clearly spelled out so that the rights of tenants and/or landlords are not violated by such programmes.

There was strong support from the group that the City provide publicity for the existing shared housing programmes. At present, the programmes rely solely on free publicity. A representative from the Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants' Association said the Association could also support such initiatives by advertising in the Tenant Association Newsletters.

Feedback:

A copy of the final report to Planning Committee will be made available to all persons attending the May 22nd consultation meeting, and to other individuals who have indicated an interest in receiving the report.

DISPOSITION

i) Expansion of an existing Shared Housing Programme.

Community Development to initiate the Purchase of Service Agreement in 1985. Once the Purchase of Service Agreement is operational, the responsibility for on-going administration, monitoring and evaluation will be transferred to City Living. It is expected that this will occur in the latter part of 1985.

ii) Shared Housing Awareness Programme.

City Living to initiate this programme as soon as existing staff resources are available to undertake the initial steps towards hiring the Shared Housing Community Liaison Officer.

FINANCIAL COMMENT

Funds in the amount of $73,000 for the estimated cost of Recommendation 1 and 4 can be provided as an authorized overdraft in account 709-1531-6998 and transferred as follows:

Department Code	Purpose	Amount
Community Development Department	Shared Housing Programme for Families	$30,000
Non-Departmental Housing Grants	Shared Housing Awareness Programme	43,000
		$73,000

The source of funding to offset the overdraft will be identified in future status reports:

Overdraft Summary

Total to Date	$1,708,200
This Request	73,000
Total Overdraft	$1,781,200

As payments under both programmes are proposed to be paid during the fiscal periods of 1985 and 1986, the portion for 1986 for the Shared Housing Programme for families and for the Shared Housing Awareness Programme will be encumbered in 1985 and brought forward to 1986 to fund this commitment.

Approval of recommendation 3 will constitute a prior authority for the necessary transfer of funds, as required, to be processed from Community Development to Non-Departmental, Housing Grants Code 709-181.

Commissioner of Finance
PAV:gmk 16/07/85

Attachment (1)

List of People Interviewed While Preparing This Report

1. David Kardish, Housing Planner, Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton.
2. Jacquelin Holzman, Alderman, Richmond Ward.
3. Sharon Peebles, Co-ordinator, Match and Share Programme.
4. Gerry Jackson, Administrator, Homes for the Aged.
5. Maxine Stata, President, Ottawa Council For Low Income Support Services.
6. Trudy Sutton, Director of Social Services, YM-YWCA
7. Cassie Doyle, Policy Analyst, City Living.
8. Dan McIntyre, Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants' Associations.